

Public Law 558

CHAPTER 647

JOINT RESOLUTION

To strengthen the foreign relations of the United States by establishing a Commission on Governmental Use of International Telecommunications.

July 29, 1954
[S. J. Res. 96]

Whereas the overseas information program as carried on through the media of telecommunications is of continuing and increasing importance in carrying out and supporting the foreign policies of the United States; and

Whereas in his State of the Union message, February 2, 1953, the President asserted the necessity "to make more effective all activities related to international information": Therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there is hereby established a commission to be known as the Commission on Governmental Use of International Telecommunications (in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

Commission on
Governmental Use
of International
Telecommunica-
tions.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 2. NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of nine members as follows:

(1) Five appointed by the President of the United States, of whom at least one shall be appointed from the telecommunications industry and at least one from the field of education and of whom not more more than three shall be from the same political party;

(2) Two appointed from the Senate by the President of the Senate of whom not more than one shall be from the same political party; and

(3) Two appointed from the House of Representatives by the Speaker of the House of Representatives of whom not more than one shall be from the same political party.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 3. The Commission shall choose its Chairman and Vice Chairman from among its members and shall establish its own procedure.

QUORUM

SEC. 4. Five members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 5. (a) MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.—Members of Congress who are members of the Commission shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as Members of Congress; but without regard to any other provision of law they shall be reimbursed for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of the duties vested in the Commission and reasonable advances may be made to them for such purposes.

(b) MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.—Any members of the Commission who may be in the executive branch of the Government shall receive the compensation which he would receive if he were not a member of the Commission, but without regard to any other provision of law they shall be reimbursed for travel, subsistence and other necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of the duties vested in the Commission and reasonable advances may be made to them for such purposes.

(c) **MEMBERS FROM PRIVATE LIFE.**—The members from private life shall receive not to exceed \$75 per diem when engaged in the performance of duties vested in the Commission, plus reimbursement for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of such duties.

STAFF OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 6. The Commission shall have power to appoint a Secretary General at a salary of not to exceed \$15,000 per annum, and an Assistant Secretary General at a salary of not to exceed \$12,500 per annum, and such other personnel in accordance with the Classification Act of 1949, as amended, or to obtain assistance from Government agencies on a reimbursable basis. The Commission is further authorized to employ experts and consultants for temporary and intermittent personal services, but at rates not to exceed \$75 per diem for each individual. The Commission is authorized without regard to any other provision of law to reimburse employees, experts, and consultants for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of their official duties and to make reasonable advances to such persons for such purposes.

EXPENSES OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 7. There is hereby authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, not to exceed \$250,000 to carry out the provisions of this Act.

REPORT—EXPIRATION OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 8. (a) REPORT.—On or before December 31, 1954, the Commission shall make a report of its findings and recommendations to the Congress. It may submit such interim reports as it deems desirable.

(b) **EXPIRATION OF THE COMMISSION.**—Ninety days after the submission to the Congress of the report provided for in subsection (a) of this section 8, the Commission shall cease to exist.

DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 9. The Commission is directed to examine, study, and report on the objectives, operations, and effectiveness of our information programs with respect to the prompt development of techniques, methods, and programs for greatly expanded and far more effective operations in this vital area of foreign policy through the use of foreign telecommunications.

POWERS OF THE COMMISSION

Hearings.

Subpena.

Expenditures.
Fiscal statement and audit.

SEC. 10. (a) The Commission or, on the authorization of the Commission, any subcommittee or member thereof, shall have power to hold hearings and sit and act at such times and places in the United States and abroad, to require by subpena or otherwise the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, to administer such oaths, and to take such testimony, as the Commission or such subcommittee or member may deem advisable. Subpenas shall be issued under the signature of the Chairman of the Commission and shall be served by any person designated by him.

(b) The Commission may authorize the Chairman or the Vice Chairman to make the expenditures herein authorized and such other

expenditures as the Commission may deem advisable: *Provided, however*, That when the Commission ceases its activities it shall submit to the Appropriations Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives a statement of its fiscal transactions properly audited by the Comptroller General of the United States.

(c) The Commission is authorized to secure from any department, agency, or independent instrumentality of the Government any information it deems necessary to carry out its functions under this Act; and each such department, agency, and instrumentality is authorized and directed to furnish such information to the Commission, upon request made by the Chairman or by the Vice Chairman when acting as Chairman.

Securing of information.

Approved July 29, 1954.

Public Law 559

CHAPTER 648

AN ACT

July 30, 1954
[S. 252]

To permit all civil actions against the United States for recovery of taxes erroneously or illegally assessed or collected to be brought in the district courts with right of trial by jury.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That paragraph (1) of section 1346 (a) of title 28 of the United States Code is amended to read as follows:

District courts' jurisdiction.
62 Stat. 933; 63 Stat. 101.
Tax recovery.

"(1) Any civil action against the United States for the recovery of any internal-revenue tax alleged to have been erroneously or illegally assessed or collected, or any penalty claimed to have been collected without authority or any sum alleged to have been excessive or in any manner wrongfully collected under the internal-revenue laws;"

SEC. 2. (a) Section 2402 of title 28 of the United States Code is amended to read as follows:

62 Stat. 971.

"§ 2402. Jury trial in actions against United States.

"Any action against the United States under section 1346 shall be tried by the court without a jury, except that any action against the United States under section 1346 (a) (1) shall, at the request of either party to such action, be tried by the court with a jury."

(b) The second item in the analysis of chapter 161 of title 28 of the United States Code is amended to read as follows:

"2402. Jury trial in actions against United States."

Approved July 30, 1954.